

OBTAINING PRE-ADOPTION AND OTHER BIRTH CERTIFICATES FROM ALABAMA SEALED FILES

BACKGROUND: Alabama law directs the State Registrar to establish a new birth certificate after an adoption, legitimation or paternity determination takes place. The new birth certificate is substituted for the original birth certificate in the files, and the original birth certificate and evidence of adoption, legitimation or paternity determination are placed in a sealed file (Section 22-9A-12). In 2000, the legislature amended the vital records law to allow a person whose original birth certificate was placed in a sealed file to obtain a non-certified copy of that record and any other documents in the sealed file.

WHO MAY REQUEST A COPY?

- The person named on the birth certificate -- no other family member.
- Person must be at least 19 years old.
- Person must have been born in Alabama, or foreign-born and adopted in Alabama.
- Person must have had an original birth certificate removed from the files due to an adoption, legitimation or paternity determination.

WHAT WILL THE APPLICANT RECEIVE?

- The applicant will receive a copy of the original birth certificate clearly marked that it is not a certified copy and it may not be used for legal purposes. Note that one may not be available for a foreign-born adoptee. The information on the birth certificate in the file is shown as it was provided by the birth parent(s) at the time of birth. The information may or may not be accurate.
- The applicant will receive copies of all other documents in the sealed file which often include the legal documents from the court where the adoption or paternity determination took place or other legal documents from a legitimation. These files usually do not contain medical or other information about the birth parents.
- In the case of persons who were adopted, the revision of the law in 2000 allows birth parents to submit a Contact Preference and Medical History Form which will be placed in the sealed file upon receipt. If a Contact Preference and Medical History Form is in the file at the time the original birth record is requested, it will be sent to the applicant.

HOW SHOULD THESE RECORDS BE ORDERED?

- Applicants must clearly state they are seeking their original birth certificate prior to adoption, legitimation or paternity determination. Without this information, we will send the current legal birth record.
- Valid identification must be submitted with a request for an original birth record prior to adoption, legitimation or paternity determination. **See the identification requirements on the reverse side of the “Request for Pre-Adoption or Other Birth Certificate from an Alabama Sealed File” application.**
- Complete a “Request for Pre-Adoption or Other Birth Certificate from an Alabama Sealed File” application or send the following information to locate your **current** legal birth certificate:
 - Your full name as it appears on your **current** legal birth certificate
 - Date of birth
 - County of birth
 - Full name of mother/parent before first marriage as it appears on your **current** legal birth certificate
 - Full name of father/parent before first marriage as it appears on your **current** legal birth certificate
- Include your mailing address and telephone number where we can reach you during the day.
- Sign and date the request. The request will not be processed unless it is signed by the applicant.
- Include the non-refundable processing fee of \$25.00. The additional fee to expedite a request is \$15.00. Check or money order should be made payable to “State Board of Health.”
- Mail to: **Center for Health Statistics, P.O. Box 5625, Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5625.**

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CALL 334.206.5426

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REQUEST FOR PRE-ADOPTION OR OTHER BIRTH CERTIFICATE FROM AN ALABAMA SEALED FILE

When an adoption, legitimation or paternity determination takes place, a new birth certificate is substituted for the original birth certificate in the files, and the original birth certificate and evidence of adoption, legitimation or paternity determination is placed in a sealed file.

A sealed file includes a copy of the original birth certificate clearly marked that it is not a certified copy and it may not be used for legal purposes. An original birth certificate may not be available for a foreign-born adoptee. Legal documents from the court where the adoption or paternity determination took place or other legal documents from a legitimation are also usually included. Medical or other information about the birth parents is not included in most cases, unless a Contact Preference and Medical History Form was submitted by the birth parents.

Only the person named on the birth certificate may request a sealed file. The person must be at least 19 years old; must have been born in Alabama, or foreign-born and adopted in Alabama; and must have had an original birth certificate removed from the files due to an adoption, legitimation or paternity determination.

The fee to search for and provide the contents of a sealed file is \$25.00. There is an additional fee of \$15.00 to expedite a request. Make check or money order payable to "State Board of Health." Do not send cash. **Fees are non-refundable.**

Valid identification must be submitted with a sealed file request. See the identification requirements on the reverse side. Provide as much of the following information as possible for us to locate your current birth certificate, which is necessary to locate the sealed file. Complete and sign the applicant section or your request cannot be processed.

MAIL THIS COMPLETED FORM WITH VALID IDENTIFICATION AND FEE TO:

Center for Health Statistics
P.O. Box 5625
Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5625

If you have any questions, call 334.206.5426. Visit our website at www.alabamapublichealth.gov/vitalrecords.

BIRTH: (SEE ID REQUIREMENTS ON REVERSE SIDE)

FULL NAME AS IT CURRENTLY APPEARS ON BIRTH CERTIFICATE _____
First Middle Last

DATE OF BIRTH _____ SEX _____

COUNTY OF BIRTH _____ HOSPITAL _____

FULL NAME OF MOTHER/PARENT BEFORE FIRST MARRIAGE AS IT CURRENTLY APPEARS ON BIRTH CERTIFICATE _____

FULL NAME OF FATHER/PARENT BEFORE FIRST MARRIAGE AS IT CURRENTLY APPEARS ON BIRTH CERTIFICATE _____

APPLICANT SECTION (THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED)

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Valid identification must be submitted with a request for a sealed file. Anyone falsely applying for a record is subject to a penalty upon conviction of up to three months in the county jail or a fine of up to \$500. (Code of Alabama 1975, § 13A-10-109). By signing, you are certifying you have a legal right to the record requested.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Print Your Name _____

Mail to Name (if Different from You) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Daytime Phone (_____) _____

I allow the following individual to receive the sealed file _____

IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR RESTRICTED ALABAMA VITAL RECORDS

Identification is required of any applicant requesting a restricted Alabama vital record (birth certificate less than 125 years from the date of birth or death certificate less than 25 years from the date of death). The applicant must submit a completed request and **one** form of identification from the **Primary ID** list below. In the event the applicant is unable to provide identification from the Primary ID list, he/she may provide **two** different forms of identification from the **Secondary ID** list.

If the applicant designates another individual to pick up a restricted certificate on his/her behalf, both the applicant **and** the designee must provide acceptable identification.

The completed request, as well as a copy of all identification submitted, will be maintained by the vital records office which processes the request.

Primary IDs Including PHOTO (need at least one, current, expired no more than 60 days)	Secondary IDs (need at least two)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alabama Driver's License - Out-of-State Driver's License - State-Issued Non-Driver ID - U.S. or Foreign Passport - U.S. Certificate of Naturalization - Certificate of Citizenship - U.S. Military ID - Work ID (If applicant is employee of agency/company making request) - Alien Resident Card (Temporary or Permanent) - U.S. Employment Authorization Card - Citizenship ID Card - Tribal ID - Pilot's License - Boating License - Concealed Weapons License - Ex-Felon ID - Inmate ID issued by the U.S. Dept of Justice w/ following documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Supporting documents from institution if inmate is still in custody, letter of release from institution if inmate has been released - School ID (Must include current school term) - Alabama Voter Identification Card 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expired, Government-Issued ID - Utility Bill (No more than 6 months old) - Work ID (If applicant is making personal request) - Vehicle Registration or Vehicle Title - Property Tax Bill - Military Discharge (DD Form 214) - Voter Registration Card - Health Insurance Card - Social Security Correspondence (not Card) - U.S. Selective Service Card - Recent DMV Receipt for Fines Paid - Fishing or Hunting License - Copy of Police Report or other official documents which support theft, in cases where individual's ID has been stolen - Autism Spectrum Card - Immunization (Shot) Record <p><i>*In special cases where applicant is unable to provide any of these documents, please contact CHS at 334.206.5418.</i></p>